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FORT McDOWELL

ANGEL ISLAND

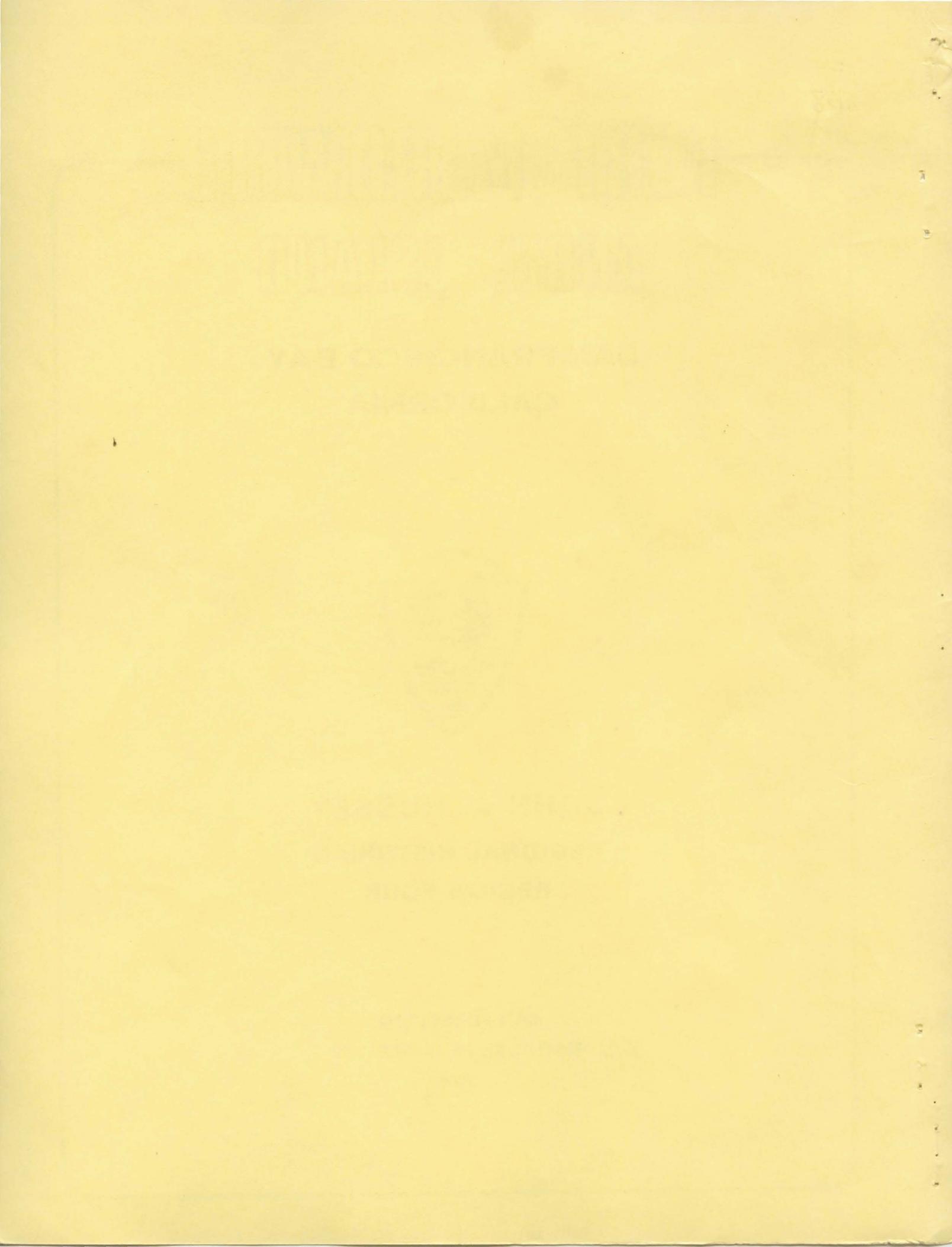
**SAN FRANCISCO BAY
CALIFORNIA**



**JOHN A. HUSSEY
REGIONAL HISTORIAN
REGION FOUR**

**SAN FRANCISCO
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
REGION FOUR

FORT McDOWELL

Angel Island, Marin and San Francisco Counties, California

WAA Registry No. ESF10:PN1, Fort McDowell W-Cal-191

REPORT ON APPLICATION

by

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF MARIN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

FOR TRANSFER OF SURPLUS PROPERTIES

FOR AN HISTORICAL MONUMENT

Prepared for

Region 10, War Assets Administration

April 1949

Author:
John A. Hussey, Historian

REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONAL
DEFENSE AGAINST THE
TERRORIST THREAT

REASONABLE AND
PROPORTIONAL DEFENSE AND THE ABSENCE OF TERRORIST THREAT
91-100-7 (Memorandum dated 12/10/1992, all references 11/12/92)

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FORT McDOWELL
Angel Island, Marin and San Francisco Counties, California

Report on Application
by

Board of Supervisors, County of Marin, State of California
for

Transfer of Surplus Properties for an Historical Monument

FOREWORD

Authority and Purpose:

Section 13(h) of the Surplus Property Act of 1944, amended by Public Law 616, 80th Congress, approved June 10, 1948, authorizes the disposal by the War Assets Administration to States, political subdivisions, instrumentalities thereof, and municipalities, of surplus real property, together with surplus improvements and equipment located thereon, which may be determined by the Secretary of the Interior to be suitable and desirable for public park and public recreational areas or as historic monuments.

This report is submitted in accordance with the authority to make final determination delegated to the Director of the National Park Service by the Secretary of the Interior, July 14, 1948.

The purpose of this report is to describe, analyze, and evaluate the property desired by the applicant in respect to its proposed historic monument use and to recommend disposal determination.

Application

Applicant: Board of Supervisors, County of Marin, State of California, San Rafael, California

Date: October 11, 1948

Description of Property: The surplus real property requested at Fort McDowell consists of the whole of Angel Island, located in San Francisco Bay, and comprising 640.2 acres, more or less, together with tidal lands for 300 yards beyond low tide mark, subject to existing leases and permits on portions thereof. Also requested are such of the improvements (consisting of approximately 235 buildings, roads, utilities, water tanks, etc.) as may be deemed of historical importance or necessary for the administration of the island.

Program of Utilization

The near-term program is chiefly to preserve the island and its historical features as they are at present and to keep the area free of any extensive structural development. The ultimate program calls

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for the construction of a museum for the presentation of the history of Angel Island and San Francisco Bay.

Extent of Investigation

Notification respecting the application by Marin County for Fort McDowell from Region 10, War Assets Administration, to the National Park Service is dated February 18, 1949. Having been informed by the War Assets Administration that such a notification was to be expected, the Region Four Office, National Park Service, made a preliminary study of the history of Angel Island during parts of October, November, and December, 1948. This investigation was carried on principally in the Bancroft Library and the University of California Library, Berkeley, California; the San Francisco Public Library; the California Historical Society; the Society of California Pioneers; and the United States District Court, Northern District of California. Research at these same institutions was continued at intervals during the period February 18 to April 1, 1949.

On March 30, 1949, Dr. John A. Hussey, historian, and Mr. Harold Fowler, park planner, visited Angel Island to make a site reconnaissance of historical remains and to conduct research among the records of the Quarantine Station, U. S. Public Health Service.

Under the direction of Mr. Ronald F. Lee, Chief Historian, National Park Service, research concerning the history of Angel Island was done in the War Records Office and the Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, both in The National Archives, Washington, D. C. Notes on these materials, as well as copies of maps from the Office of the Chief of Engineers, were forwarded to the Region Four Office for the purpose of this study.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended Determination

It is recommended that the determination of Angel Island for historical monument purposes be favorable.

The property requested for historical monument purposes is suitable and desirable for such use, and the historical values of the area are such as to qualify it in its entirety for transfer as an historical monument.

Resumé of the Historical Justification

In 1775 Angel Island was the base from which a Spanish expedition conducted the first detailed exploration of San Francisco Bay, an exploration which resulted in the significance of this great harbor being first recognized by Spain and, later, by the world. During the periods of Spanish and Mexican rule in California, Angel Island served as a watering and fueling place for visiting ships and as a cattle ranch.

Between 1863 and 1946 the island was occupied by a United States Military post which developed into one of the nation's most important recruit, replacement, and discharge depots. Between 1908 and 1941 a Federal immigration station was maintained on the property and served as the chief doorway through which Oriental immigrants entered the United States. From 1888 to the ~~present time~~ ¹⁹⁵⁰ a Public Health Service quarantine station on the island has served to protect the country from the possible importation of communicable diseases, particularly from the Orient, through the busy port of San Francisco.

These and other facts amply attest to the historical importance of Angel Island. Furthermore, the property constitutes one of the last remaining parcels of relatively unspoiled natural terrain on the shores of San Francisco Bay, and if preserved in this state it will be of increasing historical interest to future generations. ~~Also, the island would make an ideal location for a museum designed to interpret to the general public the broad history of the San Francisco Bay area.~~

Conclusions and justification regarding the suitability of the proposed use program for the historical monument

The use program proposed for the property has not been developed in sufficient detail to permit of a favorable recommendation concerning its suitability. The Board of Supervisors, County of Marin, is reluctant to go to the expense of preparing a complete use program in view of the probable favorable action of the War Assets Administration upon a pending application by the City and County of San Francisco for the outright purchase of the property. However, assurance has been given that upon a favorable determination concerning its application by the National Park Service, Marin County will prepare an adequate and detailed use program. It is recommended that the preparation of such a program should be made a condition of a favorable disposal determination regarding this application.

Conclusions and justification regarding the responsibility of the applicant to accomplish the proposed use program.

The applicant appears to have a sincere desire to preserve the historical values and the natural appearance of Angel Island and eventually to construct a museum upon the property. For reasons already indicated however, the County has made no detailed study of the costs of the proposed use program and has not indicated how it intends to meet the very considerable costs which would be involved. It is recommended, therefore, that a favorable disposal determination regarding this application be made contingent upon the receipt of a statement from the Board of Supervisors, County of Marin, that it has studied the costs which would be involved in maintaining an historical monument upon Angel Island and is prepared to defray these expenses.

If Marin County is prepared to shoulder the costs which will be involved, there is no reason why it could not successfully accomplish the proposed use program.

In regard to the responsibility of the applicant to accomplish the proposed use program, it may be well to note that the Board of Supervisors has expressed itself as willing to turn the island over to the State of California should the State wish to acquire it at some future date. It is the feeling of this investigator that the broad national and regional historical importance of Angel Island is such that it preferably should be administered by the State rather than by any particular county or municipality.

Description and justification of the recommended boundaries considered not to exceed those necessary for the preservation and proper observation of the historical monument.

The area recommended as necessary for the preservation and proper observation of the historic monument is the whole of Angel Island, together with the tidal lands belonging to the former Fort McDowell.

The nature of most of the historical values of Angel Island is such that they cannot be limited to any particular section or sections of the property; and every portion of the island has historical associations which justify its being included in the proposed historical monument.

SUPPORTING DATA

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

Syncpsis of significance in the broad history of the nation, State, or region

The geological formations visible on Angel Island are of some historical importance, since facts observed during a study of the island's structure enabled scientists to solve many puzzling problems concerning the geology of central California. Indian shellmounds on the property have not yet been scientifically investigated.

In 1775 a Spanish expedition under Ayala used the island as a base from which to conduct the first detailed exploration of San Francisco Bay. This survey resulted in the recognition of the harbor's merits by Spain and by the world and marks the real beginning of the harbor's history as a port.

During the periods of Spanish and Mexican control of California, Angel Island was occasionally used by sea otter hunters and by whaling and trading vessels as a fueling and watering spot. The property was thus linked historically with one of the most important phases of California's, and of the nation's, economic development during the early 1800's. A cattle rancho was established on the island, and the present virtually unspoiled appearance of the property permits the visualization of how it appeared at the time when it thus was an example of one of the most typical economic institutions of Mexican California.

Between 1863 and 1946 Angel Island was almost continuously occupied

by the United States Army, and it was thus one of the oldest military posts in the West. For many years one of the nation's most important recruit, replacement, and discharge depots was located here. For about twelve years the post was commanded by William R. Shafter, later the hero of Santiago.

From 1888 to the present time the United States Public Health Service has maintained a quarantine station upon the island. This installation has been an important factor in the prevention of the importation into the United States of communicable diseases from foreign lands, particularly from the Orient. Several men who rose to prominence in the field of preventive medicine at one time served at the Angel Island Quarantine Station.

To meet a desperate need, an Immigration Service detention station was established on Angel Island in 1908. Here, until 1941, aliens were held while being examined for entry. This station was the most important on the Pacific Coast, and through it passed most of the Chinese and Japanese immigrants to the United States during the period of its occupancy. In a measure, Angel Island thus merits being called the "Ellis Island of the West."

From the summary given above, it can be seen that Angel Island is amply qualified under the criteria approved by the Advisory Board for transfer as an historical monument. The Ayala expedition alone gives it an association with "some dramatic incident in State or regional history." As a military post and immigration station it was "symbolical of some great idea or ideal." It was associated with the lives of several important men. Furthermore, it would be ideal as a point "from which the broad political, military, social or cultural history" of the region could be presented, and the use program for the property anticipates the creation of a museum to present this story.

Identification of the Property

The locations of legal descriptions of this property are indicated by references in the historical narrative section of this report. There is no question concerning the historical identification of this property.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Geology

In essence, Angel Island is a large block of sandstone of the type known to geologists as San Francisco sandstone. The rock lies in layers or beds which dip to the northwest into Raccoon Strait. The strata have been warped so as to form a rough trough which runs along about a northwest-southeast axis through the approximate center of the island. Hospital Cove marks the spot where the lowest part of the trough disappears beneath the waters of the bay.

At Quarry Point, on the eastern shore of the island, the sandstone is found in massive beds, but elsewhere it generally lies in thin layers, separated by "slight partings" of shale. Occasional bands of pebbles are found in the sandstone, forming areas of conglomerate rock. A relatively high content of non-quartzose materials probably is responsible for the fact that the sandstone disintegrates quite rapidly when used as a building stone.

Scattered about in isolated patches in the sandstone is another sedimentary rock, a jaspery stone described as "radiolarian chert." This stone is made up of the accumulated siliceous skeletons of radiolaria, minute marine animals most abundantly found in warm seas. An instructive exposure of this rock, showing a gradual change of sedimentation from sandstone to chert, may be seen on the eastern shore of Hospital Cove. The discovery during the 1890's of radiolaria skeletons in the Angel Island cherts was of some importance to geologists, since it helped disprove an earlier theory that certain cherts of the San Francisco Bay area were ordinary shales silicified during regional metamorphism.

Angel Island also contains some interesting igneous or eruptive rocks. The most abundant of these is fourchite, a fairly uniform, compactly textured rock. The largest mass of this stone occurs as an intrusive sheet or sill between the layers of granite. The exposed edge of this sheet forms a horseshoe-shaped bank which is practically concentric with the crescent-like ridge surrounding Hospital Cove. Another large body of fourchite forms Point Stuart and the western tip of the island, and other patches are scattered over the entire terrain. Geologists believe that all of the fourchite on the island is of the same age and came from the same original magma.

Perhaps the most interesting, and certainly the most conspicuous geologic feature of Angel Island is the large dike of serpentinized igneous rock which cuts across its western half, beginning at the cove northeast of Point Stuart and running in a southwesterly direction. In the words of F. Leslie Ransome, who in 1894 published the first detailed geological study of the island, the "fantastically weathered outcrops" of this dike, "projecting from the scil-covered hill slopes, form a striking feature of the landscape, and, together with numerous loose blocks and boulders, define its course as a broad gray band stretching over hill and dale."¹ It is believed that the serpentine of Angel Island has resulted from the serpentinization of a holocrystalline basic eruptive rock composed wholly or mainly of diabase.

Where the igneous rocks - the fourchite and that of which the serpentine is a derivative - forced their way into the sandstone and chert, there exist along the contact lines some metamorphic rocks. These latter rocks are those which were altered by heat or pressure at the time of intrusion.

¹F. Leslie Ransome, The Geology of Angel Island (University of California, Publications of the Department of Geology, vol. I, no. 7, Berkeley, 1894), 195.

The metamorphism exhibited on Angel Island is remarkable both for its intensity and for the mineralogical simplicity of the resulting rocks, chiefly schists. These schists appear to be of the same composition and structure regardless of whether they resulted from the metamorphism of the sandstone or the chert or whether they lie adjacent to the serpentine or the fourchite. The observation of this fact on Angel Island enabled geologists to overturn a previously held theory that all of the glaucophane schists of the Coast Ranges originated in a general regional metamorphism. When it was realized that identical schists could be formed by different instances of local contact metamorphism, scientists were able to solve many perplexing problems concerning the geology of the San Francisco Bay Area.²

Aboriginal Life on Angel Island

There exists abundant archaeological evidence that Angel Island was at one time inhabited by Indians. A reconnaissance survey made in 1908 revealed remains of at least four Indian shellmounds within the island's limited area.

These mounds were once very numerous on the shores of San Francisco Bay and represent the accumulated refuse of aboriginal villages. Being largely dependent upon shellfish for food, the native inhabitants of the bay shore had large numbers of shells to dispose of each day and generally dumped them in the immediate vicinity of their dwellings. After hundreds, and even thousands of years, these shells, together with charcoal, animal and fish bones, rocks, broken and lost implements, and other materials, sometimes formed very extensive heaps. As the litter piled up, the Indians simply built new dwellings on top of the mounds. Presumably because the heaps were easy to dig in, they were convenient places for the burial of the dead.³

The largest of the Angel Island shellmounds was situated on the north shore at the head of the shallow cove west of Simpton Point and on ground occupied by the present North Garrison. This mound apparently was about three hundred feet wide and filled the mouth of the small canyon which drops down to the cove. Beginning in 1908, construction of the wharf and buildings of the Government immigration station largely destroyed or obscured the shell heap, but traces of it can still be seen. While excavating for the Immigration Service buildings, workmen uncovered at least a dozen skeletons, as well as numerous mortars, pestles, charmstones, arrowpoints, and other evidences of aboriginal occupation.

²This discussion of the geology of Angel Island is based upon Ransome, op. cit.

³For further general information concerning Bay region shellmounds, see Edward Winslow Gifford, Composition of California Shellmounds (University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. XII, No. 1, Berkeley, 1916), 1-14; and N. C. Nelson, Shellmounds of the San Francisco Bay Region (ibid., vol. VII, no. 4, Berkeley, 1909).

A second shellmound stood at the head of Hospital Cove, on ground now occupied by the Public Health Service Quarantine Station. This mound was destroyed during the construction of the station and before scientists had an opportunity to examine it. Thus nothing is known about its original size, but evidence of its existence is still abundant on the station grounds.

The third of the Angel Island mounds is situated in the saddle on the top of the ridge connecting Stuart Point with the main portion of the island. The hospital of the present West Garrison stands on or near this mound, which originally measured about two hundred feet in diameter. During the construction of roads and buildings at the former Camp Reynolds much of the mound was obliterated.

The fourth shellheap is located on the east shore at the head of the cove south of Quarry Point. The shell is exposed on the sand bluff which drops off to the beach. The mound in 1908 measured about 75 by 275 feet, and since relatively little construction has taken place on this site, it is probable that at least a part of the mound is still available for study.⁴

Since no detailed scientific examination of the Angel Island shellmounds has ever been made, it is impossible to estimate their age or to know whether or not they were inhabited by several successive groups of people representing different cultural levels. At the time San Francisco Bay was first seen by white men, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, the island presumably was within the territory of the Coast Miwok peoples, since the adjoining mainland was inhabited by natives speaking the southern dialect of that tongue.⁵ There appears to exist, however, no direct historical evidence upon this point, nor are there any known descriptions of the Indian inhabitants of the island during historical times.

Discovery of Angel Island

As far as is known, Angel Island first entered the pages of recorded history in the narratives of the Portolá expedition, which in 1769 came northward by land and sea from what is now Mexico to begin the actual occupation of California for Spain. Commencing with Cabrillo in 1542, navigators of several nations had sailed along the coast of Alta California and had named and charted a number of harbors and landmarks; but there is no proof that any of these explorers ever laid eyes on the great landlocked harbor now known as the Bay of San Francisco. This "jewel of the west coast of North America" seemingly

⁴This description of the Angel Island shellmounds is based upon original manuscript field notes made by N. C. Nelson and kept in the Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley. See also United States, War Department, Surgeon-General's Office, A Report on Barracks and Hospitals, with Descriptions of Military Posts (Circular No. 4, Washington, 1870), 441.

⁵S. A. Barrett, The Ethno-Geography of the Pomo and Neighboring Indians (Univ. of Calif. Pub. in Am. Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. VI, no. 1, Berkeley, 1908), 305-306.

lay unknown to white men until it was sighted from the land by men of Portolá's company on the first or second day of November, 1769.

After founding a settlement at San Diego, Governor Don Gaspar de Portolá rode northward up the California coast with a section of his company in search of the port of Monterey, which had been described by earlier navigators. Reaching Monterey Bay, but not believing it to be the one he sought, Portolá continued northward until, on October 31, he and his men stood on some hills south of San Pedro Creek on the Peninsula of San Francisco. Far ahead they could see a point of land jutting out into the sea and several islands. They recognized these features as marking what was then known as La Baya de San Francisco, now known as the Gulf of the Farallones.

To make certain of the identification, Sergeant Don José Francisco de Ortega was sent northward on the next day with a scouting party, instructed to reconnoitre the country as far as Point Reyes. During Ortega's absence, some soldiers from the main camp went hunting in the hills to the northeast and returned with startling information. From the summit on November 2, they had seen an "immense arm of the sea or an estuary," the southern arm of the present San Francisco Bay.⁶ Theirs was the first recorded discovery of the bay by Europeans.

As a matter of fact, however, the new port was almost certainly first seen by Sergeant Ortega or one of his companions. The scout returned to Portolá's camp on November 3 and reported that his way to Point Reyes had been cut off by an inlet which led into the estuary described by the hunters. Although little is known of Ortega's movements during his push to the northward, he could easily have reached the present Golden Gate on November first.

But regardless of whether Ortega saw the bay on November first or second, or of whether he observed it from the shores of the Golden Gate or from some other vantage point, he and the members of his band were probably the first Europeans to see the present Angel Island. On November 5, Portolá recorded in his diary that the bay which had been discovered was "a great arm of the sea . . . which the pioneers said formed a sheltered port with two islands in the middle."⁷ By "pioneers" the Governor must have meant Ortega and his scouts, since the hunters could not have seen two islands from the summits from which they viewed the bay. The islands were probably Angel and Alcatraz, both visible from the shores of the Golden Gate.

⁶Herbert E. Bolton, Fray Juan Crespi, Missionary Explorer (Berkeley, California, 1927), 229.

⁷Gaspar de Portolá, Diary of Gaspar de Portolá during the California Expedition of 1769-1770, edited by Donald Eugene Smith and Frederick J. Teggart (Publications of the Academy of Pacific Coast History, vol. III, no. 3, Berkeley, 1909), 39.

If, by some chance, Angel Island was not recognized as an island by Ortega on November first or second, it is certain that he was aware of the existence of the island after a scouting trip which he made up the eastern shore of the bay several days later. On February 6, 1770, Fray Juan Crespi, chaplain of the expedition, wrote to Fray Francisco Palou describing the body of water which had been found. "This great estuary or arm of the sea," he wrote, "connects with the ocean between some high mountains which form, they say, three islands within the strait."⁸ Since there are only three sizeable islands - Alcatraz, Angel, and Yerba Buena - near the mouth of San Francisco Bay, Angel Island must have been seen by members of the Portolá expedition.

After the Portolá expedition, the next Spanish visits to San Francisco Bay were made in connection with attempts to reach Drake's Bay, where it was intended to establish a mission. The present San Francisco Bay was considered an obstacle in the path of these expeditions, and the Spaniards were so intent upon finding ways to get around it that they were slow to recognize it as a great harbor in its own right.

The records of several of these expeditions, notably that made by Don Pedro Fages in 1772, mention an island which can be identified as Angel Island. The first real description of the island, however, was made in December, 1774, by Fray Francisco Palou, chaplain and diarist of an expedition commanded by Don Fernando Rivera y Moncada. On December 4, the party stood on the shores of the Golden Gate. From the hill about 150 yards east of Point Lobos the men surveyed the surrounding area.

"To the north in the mouth of the bay," recorded Palou in his diary, "we saw a moderately large island, but it did not obstruct the entrance, for between it and the land on the south we saw the channel by which entrance can be had into the estuary which runs to the south-east. On the north side there is another channel by which the estuary to the northwest enters. It seemed to us that each of the two channels had the same width as the mouth where it enters the bay."

The island mentioned by Fray Palou can be none other than Angel Island, which appears to be in mid channel when viewed from the hill above Point Lobos. The channel north of Angel Island is the present Raccoon Strait.

"Behind the island," continued Palou in his journal, "there is a great deal of water, and it seems that near the shore the land is level. Although we saw high mountains, it seemed to us that they were some distance from the beach, and that if barks should enter by the mouth of channel they could anchor behind the island, where they would be

⁸Bolton, Fray Juan Crespi, 28.

sheltered from the winds."⁹

Although subsequent exploration was to reveal many more satisfactory anchorages in the bay than behind Angel Island, Palóu's suggestion is interesting in view of the use made of the island by the Ayala expedition of the next year.

Rivera's was the last of the expeditions which tried to reach the bay under Point Reyes with the idea that there lay the Puerto de San Francisco. By 1775 it was realized by the explorers and by the officials in California, at least, that the newly-discovered "estuary" formed a vastly superior harbor; and the name "Puerto de San Francisco" gradually came to be applied to the erstwhile stumbling-block.

The Ayala Expedition, 1775

In 1775 the viceroy of New Spain, Don Antonio María Bucareli y Ursusa, commissioned Don Juan Bautista de Anza to bring troops and settlers from Mexico to occupy the new Port of San Francisco. Although the bay had been partially explored from the land, no entrance had yet been made from the sea. To conduct a thorough examination of the harbor and to make other preparations for the Anza colonists, Bucareli sent the pocket-boat San Carlos north from San Blas in the spring of 1775.

Delayed by contrary winds and a stop at Monterey, the vessel did not reach the entrance to the Bay of San Francisco until the morning of August 5. Standing off shore, the ship's commander, Lieutenant of Frigate Don Juan Manuel de Ayala, ordered the launch lowered and in it sent his first pilot, Don José de Cañizares, to seek out a safe anchorage within the harbor's mouth. By evening, however, the launch had not returned. Approaching darkness and the swift current made it necessary to seek shelter, and thus Ayala turned the San Carlos into the Golden Gate.

At half past ten on that night the first European ship anchored in San Francisco Bay, one league within the mouth and a quarter of a league from the shore. The anchorage was probably just inside the present Fort Point, in the vicinity of North Beach.

Early the next morning, August 6, the launch returned to the ship, and a short time later Ayala sent Cañizares to examine a harbor to the northwest. This harbor, probably Richardson Bay, was found useless because the bottom was sticky mud. Still later in the morning another cove to the north, which appeared to be better sheltered and to have a better anchorage, was visited by the launch. When the

⁹Francisco Palóu, Historical Memoirs of New California, translated by Herbert E. Bolton (4 vols., Berkeley, 1926), III, 280-281.

pilot returned he reported this bay, which some historians believe to have been on Angel Island, to be satisfactory.¹⁰ Sail was set on the San Carlos, but a strong current prevented the clumsy craft from reaching the new anchorage. Ayala was forced to drop anchor in fifteen fathoms of water at an undetermined point.

For the next five days the San Carlos apparently remained in this somewhat unsatisfactory anchorage. During this period the launch made a two-day exploration of the northern section of the bay, and some of the company went ashore to visit the Indians.

On August 12 Ayala put the launch in the water and set out in search of a better anchorage for the packet. He first examined the largest island in the port, to which he gave the name "Isla de los Angeles."¹¹ Several good anchorages, with water and firewood nearby, were found on the island. After a visit to another island, Ayala returned on board the San Carlos.

At eight o'clock on the morning of August 13, the commander set sail in order to move the vessel to a harbor which was about a mile away, but the current rose and he was forced to anchor until three in the afternoon, when he again set sail and moved the vessel to an "elbow" on the northwestern shore of the Isla de los Angeles. Here, probably in the present Hospital Cove, the anchor was dropped in nine fathoms of water and a pistol shot from the shore. The cove, wrote Ayala in his log, formed a "backwater sheltered from all winds."

From August 13 until September 7 the San Carlos remained at the anchorage at Angel Island. A second anchor was dropped on the fourteenth, and on that same day repairs were commenced on the vessel. These latter included lowering the large yards and stepping the top-masts.

While the packet remained at the Angel Island headquarters, the launch was kept almost constantly busy making explorations of the bay. As a result of these examinations, the first really accurate descriptions and maps of San Francisco Bay were produced. What was more, the Spaniards were impressed with the magnificence of the inland sea which had been so recently found. Ayala later reported to the viceroy that

¹⁰ Seeoth S. Eláredge, The March of Portolá and the . . . Log of the San Carlos (San Francisco, 1909), 59.

¹¹ Whether Ayala conferred the name on the occasion of this visit or earlier is not apparent. From the time of Palóu, it has generally been stated that the name conferred by Ayala was "Nuestra Señora de los Angeles" (Our Lady of the Angels). Palóu, Historical Memoirs, IV, 5. This may have been so, but in the log of the San Carlos kept by Ayala and on the maps drawn by Ayala and Cañizares, the name appears simply as "Isla de los Angeles."

the port of San Francisco was "one of the best that I have seen on this coast from Cape Horn."¹² The port was described as "not one harbor only, but many, with a single entrance."¹³

On August 23, fifteen Indians came to the ship on two balsas and were taken aboard, entertained, and fed. On the twenty-seventh a mass of thanksgiving was celebrated by the chaplain, Father Vicente Santa María, on the beach of the Isla de los Angeles. After the religious ceremonies, the Spanish flag was unfurled while the crew gave nine cheers for the King.

On September 7, Pilot Cañizares in "this new Port of San Francisco, at the shelter of Angel Island," dated his report to Ayala which contained the first accurate and detailed description of the bay.¹⁴ At noon that same day the San Carlos sailed from the "elbow" on Angel Island and headed out of the Golden Gate for Monterey. Near Lime Point, however, the ship struck a rock and damaged its rudder. It was necessary to anchor near the entrance to make repairs, and it was not until September 18 that the packet departed from the bay.¹⁵

Ayala's expedition proved that the new port of San Francisco was entirely different from and had no connection with the old port under Point Reyes. More important was the realization that the new bay was one of the greatest harbors of Spanish America. Many names were given by Ayala to the points, bays, islands, and channels of the new-found inland sea, but only two - those of Angel Island and Alcatraz Island - have survived to the present day.

¹² Eldredge, March of Portolá, 59.

¹³ Palou, Historical Memcirs, IV, 42.

¹⁴ Eldredge, March of Portolá, 59.

¹⁵ There is very little agreement among historians concerning many of the facts relating to Ayala's visit to San Francisco Bay. Both dates of events and places of anchorage are disputed. Since the discovery of Ayala's logbook in the Archivo General de Indias, in Seville, however, some of the arguments have been stilled. A partial translation of this log is printed in Eldredge, March of Portolá; and it forms the basis of an article by Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez, entitled "San Carlos - First Vessel to Enter the Golden Gate," in Overland Monthly, LXVIII, 2d series (December, 1916), 453-457. But even with the log at hand, old errors still persist in the writings of historians.

The above account, which is made rather full because satisfactory printed information is lacking, is based upon a transcript in the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California of Ayala's Diarie de la Navegacion que va á hacer . . . Don Juan Manuel de Ayala desde el Puerto de San Blas . . . al Presidio de Monterey y descubierta del Puerto de San Francc, MS.

Angel Island under Spain, 1775 to 1822

After its brief moment of prominence as base for the first detailed exploration of San Francisco Bay, Angel Island lapsed into another period of obscurity. To be sure, it was occasionally mentioned in the records of Spanish expeditions which came in the wake of Ayala to make further examination of the port, such as those of Heceta in 1775 and Anza early in 1776. But after 1776 such mentions are few. During that year the Presidio and Mission of San Francisco were founded south of the Golden Gate, and the attention of the Spaniards was directed away from the north shore and the islands in the bay. Anchorages more convenient to the new settlements were found, and there is no record of further use of the "elbow" on Angel Island by the ships of Spain.

Despite Spain's efforts to discourage visits to her dominions by foreigners, vessels of other nations occasionally visited San Francisco Bay, and some of them appear to have found Angel Island an ideal spot to obtain water and fuel, to repair their craft, and to conduct activities about which they wished the Spaniards to know as little as possible. In February, 1809, for instance, Aleuts brought down from Alaska by a Russian expedition were reported to be hunting sea otters in San Francisco Bay and on la Isla de los Angeles.¹⁶ For the most part, however, little is known of the use of the island by foreigners during the Spanish period.

Angel Island under Mexico, 1822-1846

After Mexico took control of California, regulations against foreign shipping were relaxed. San Francisco Bay became a favorite resort for whalers, hide-droughers, and other vessels which had occasion to touch the coast. No other spot on the California shoreline, said one American seaman, was as convenient for replenishing supplies of wood and water.¹⁷ Sausalito, on the mainland of the present Marin County, appears to have been the place most frequented for these purposes, but a number of vessels obtained their wood and water from Angel Island.

A detailed account of the fueling operations is given by Richard Henry Dana in his classic book, Two Years Before the Mast. Visiting the bay in the New England hide and tallow ship Alert in 1835, he noted that Angel Island was called "Wood Island" by mariners and that it was "covered with trees to the water's edge." Two of the crew were sent daily to the island to cut wood, with two boys to pile it for

¹⁶J. J. Arrillaga to Commandant of San Francisco, Monterey, February 9, 1809, in Provincial Records, MS, XII, 286, in the Bancroft Library.

¹⁷Richard Henry Dana, Jr., Two Years Before the Mast, A Personal Narrative (Boston and New York, 1911), 285.

them. In about a week enough had been cut to last the vessel for a year. Several seamen and the third mate were then dispatched in a large launch which had been rented from the mission to transfer the wood to the ship. Dana feebly describes the hardships encountered in performing this work, but his narrative is not sufficiently precise to permit an exact determination of the site at which the wood was loaded.¹⁸

By 1841 Angel Island was so much used by mariners that the watering places were noted on two maps drawn during that year. One map shows the aguada and anchorage to have been located immediately north of Quarry Point; the other places the watering place directly north of Point Blunt.¹⁹

The Mexican authorities in California looked with some disfavor upon the activities of the foreigners on the island, evidently suspecting that it was being used as a base for smuggling operations. On August 17, 1837, Comandante General M. G. Vallejo urged the governor of the department to move the custom house from Monterey to San Francisco because of the "impregnable" position of the latter port. Among the points which could be defended in the harbor he particularly mentioned Angel Island, which was "the key of the whole of it."²⁰ This statement shows that at least one California official had an appreciation of the strategic importance of the island, but nothing ever came of the suggestion.

But if the government neglected the island, there was one private citizen who recognized the potential value of the property and who was determined to do something about it. Antonio Maria Osio was a politician and official in the customs service who was anxious to obtain landed property. According to his own representations, he asked the governor for a grant of Angel Island as a rancho as early as 1830, but no action was taken.

On October 7, 1837, Osio again petitioned for the island in order that he might "build a house thereon, and breed horses and mules." The matter was referred to M. G. Vallejo, military commander of the northern frontier, who reported favorably on the request but suggested

¹⁸ Dana, op. cit., 285-288; for a mention of the obtaining of wood from the island by the crew of the Stonington whaler Cabinet in 1846, see R. F. Peckham, An Eventful Life, MS, 4, in the Bancroft Library.

¹⁹ Eugène Duflet de Mofras, Exploration du territoire de l'Oregon, des Californies et de la Mer Vermicelle, exécutée pendant les années 1840, 1841 et 1842 (2 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1844), Atlas, plate 16; [Charles Wilkes], Map of Sacramento River and Bay of San Pablo with Harbor of San Francisco, photostat map in Bancroft Library.

²⁰ ²³ Howard, 273.

that it would be well to reserve to the government the right to build a fort on the principal height of the island should it be desired to do so. Accordingly, on February 19, 1838, Governor Alvarado decreed that Osio might occupy the land in question "to the end that he may make such use of it as he may deem most suitable, to build a house, raise stock, and do everything that may concern the advancement of the mercantile and agricultural branches, upon the condition that, whenever it may be convenient, the Government may establish a fort theron."

This decree did not actually grant the island to Osio but merely permitted him to occupy it, the Mexican laws forbidding the outright granting of islands on the seacoast. On July 20, 1838, however, the Mexican Minister of Interior informed Governor Alvarado that, in order to check "foreign adventurers," the President had directed that coastal lands be granted to Mexican citizens. Such grants were to be made by the governor "in concurrence" with the Departmental Assembly.

In view of this order, Osio made a new petition; and on June 11, 1839, Alvarado granted him the entire island as a rancho. The grant was properly recorded, but the Assembly never acted upon the matter.

According to his own testimony and that of other sworn witnesses, Osio placed about fifty-four head of cattle on the island in 1840. Under the care of overseers, who also built several houses and cultivated some land, these cattle increased until by 1846 they numbered about five hundred. During the Mexican War the United States naval forces in the bay were claimed to have "commenced killing cattle for military and naval uses" without respect for Osio's rights, until "there were none left."²¹ Except for brief visits, Osio never lived on the island himself.²¹

Angel Island during the 1850's

Osio's agent for Angel Island was William A. Richardson, pioneer settler of Sausalito. Richardson later testified that in 1847, in order to prevent further depredations upon Osio's property, he placed an

²¹ Testimony in California land cases concerning the extent of occupation usually must be considered with caution. Although there is no direct evidence to refute Osio's claims, the present investigator is inclined to agree with United States attorneys who expressed doubts that Osio's occupation was as extensive as described by the witnesses. The above account of Osio's grant is based primarily upon the manuscript records of the United States District Court, Northern District of California, Case No. 208, the United States vs. Antonie Maria Osio, in Office of the Clerk, United States District Court, San Francisco. See also 23 Howard, 273; California Historical Society Quarterly, XXI, 311-320; and Libro donde se asientan las despachas de terrenos adjudicadas en las años de 1839 y 1840, MS, in California State Library, Sacramento.

Englishman on the island as tenant. This man built the first wooden house "in American style" on the property and remained until 1850, when Osio rented the island to a Frenchman. During the next decade a number of squatters settled on the Isla de los Angeles, but most of them acknowledged Osio's ownership and paid rent.²²

At about the end of the fifties, however, there appears to have developed an open feud between several persons who were attempting to establish sheep and cattle ranches on the island. The party having the largest interest - possibly Osio - was represented on the property by Captain William Waterman, who was selected for the position because of his fame "as a bravado, having distinguished himself in several personal encounters as a man of undaunted courage and indomitable will."²³ Under his administration the herds and flocks multiplied and roamed without interference over the island. For nearly half a dozen years he occupied a seven-room house which had been built by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company near Point Blunt. This structure was later used by the quarry men who worked at Quarry Point. It next passed into the hands of a discharged soldier named Rafferty. Later becoming "the shelter of uncertain parties of both sexes" and a nuisance to the military authorities, the structure "became the subject of conflagration in 1867 without detriment to the morale of the locality."²⁴

The decade of the 1850's was a period of much dispute over the title to Angel Island. The defense of San Francisco Bay had been a problem of much concern to the military authorities of the United States from the moment the port was occupied on July 9, 1846. Temporary batteries were erected on the shores of the bay during the Mexican War, and after the cessation of hostilities the construction of permanent fortifications was urged. As a step in this direction a presidential executive order dated November 6, 1850, set aside "for public purposes" a number of parcels of land bordering San Francisco Bay. Among the areas so reserved was the whole of Angel Island.²⁵

Osio's title, however, was by no means dead at that time. Under an Act of Congress of March 3, 1851, a Land Commission was set up to adjudicate private land claims in California. Osio filed a claim before the Commission on February 2, 1852. His grant was confirmed by this body on October 24, 1854, and by the United States District Court, Northern District of California, in a decree filed March 24, 1856.

²²U. S. Dist. Court, N. Dist. of Calif., Transcript of the Record from the Board of U. S. Land Commissioners in Case No. 18, MS, 5-6, 10-12, 47-51.

²³Edwin Bentley, Angel Island, 1869 (mimeographed, n.p., n.d., 71, 2, 11).

²⁴U. S., War Dept., Military Reservations, California (Washington, 1940), 36-38.

But the United States appealed the case to the Supreme Court, which, during the term of December, 1859, decided that Governor Alvarado "had no authority, without the concurrence of the Departmental Assembly, to make this grant." Osio's title, therefore, was declared void,²⁵ and the cause was remanded, with directions to dismiss the petition.

During the years which have passed since the Supreme Court decision, new evidence has come to light which tends to show that Osio's claim was more firmly founded than the justices believed. There is every indication that the grant was considered valid by the California government and that it would have been recognized as such had Mexico continued to rule the country. One familiar with the history of other and far less substantial California land claims can only conclude, from this vantage point in time, that Osio was shabbily treated by the United States.

During the litigation over Osio's claim, the United States made no attempt to take over the island under the executive order of November 6, 1850. After the Supreme Court decision, however, the area was again reserved for military use by an executive order of April 20, 1860.²⁶

Angel Island gained notoriety in other ways than through court proceedings and the squabbles of squatters during the 1850's. The construction of the California State Prison at San Quentin was begun in 1853. Before it was ready for occupancy, the State's convicted criminals were confined on hulls of ships anchored off the Isla de los Angeles. The guards on those vessels were frequently overpowered or bribed, and escapes were frequent. The resulting publicity tended to place the island in ill repute.²⁷

The island also served as a favorite duelling place for the hot tempered gentry of San Francisco. Engagements of honor were so frequent and so well publicized in the city during the decade that they sometimes took on the aspect of amusements. Crowds would flock to witness the gladiatorial contests. Such was the case with the famous and tragic duel between Editor George P. Johnston and State Senator William I. Furguson, which took place on the east shore of Angel Island at five o'clock on the afternoon of August 21, 1858. It was estimated that about one hundred small craft carried the spectators to the fray. Both men were wounded in the contest, and Furguson later died while his shattered leg was being amputated.²⁸

²⁵²³ Howard, 273. The date of the decision appears to have been March 12, 1860.

²⁶ U. S., War Dept., Military Reservations, California, 36-38.

²⁷ Alta California (San Francisco), January 5, 1852.

²⁸ For the best account of this duel see Oscar T. Shuck, History of the Bench and Bar of California (Los Angeles, 1901), 240-245.

Another duel which took place on Angel Island occurred on June 28, 1854. Two men named Frost and Paine had "a difficulty" in which the former shot the latter in the head, causing his death instantly.²⁹

Establishment of Camp Reynolds, 1863

A Commission sent out by the War Department following the Mexican War to examine the defense needs of the Pacific Coast, "especially recommended" the fortifying of the entrance to San Francisco Bay; and as a result, in 1851, a Board of Engineers was set to work preparing plans. The project evolved by this board envisaged permanent works at Fort Point, Lime Point, and Alcatraz Island. Early in 1853 Congress appropriated funds to commence these defenses; and the War Department divided the money between Fort Point and Alcatraz Island, the works at Lime Point being deferred.³⁰

During the spring of 1856 another Board of Engineers for the Pacific Coast re-assessed the plan for the defenses of San Francisco. The importance of the projected "primary line of defense" - the works at Fort Point and Lime Point - was fully recognized, but the Board thought that a strong secondary line was needed to blockade the inner entrance to the harbor.

The Board termed Alcatraz Island the "most prominent position" of the secondary line. "The position next in importance" in this line, said the engineers, "is Point Stewart," upon Angel Island, since batteries there "will effectually command Raccoon Straits within short range, will prevent ships from lying at anchor in Saucelito Cove, and will cross their fire with the northwest batteries of Alcatraz Island." In addition, the Board recommended the construction of the projected fort at Lime Point and of permanent batteries at Point San José (the present Fort Mason in San Francisco) and at Point Blunt, the south-east extremity of Angel Island.³¹

This report by the Board of Engineers appears to have contained the first specific plan to place fortifications upon Angel

²⁹ Dorothy H. Huggins, Continuation of the Annals of San Francisco (San Francisco, 1939), 4.

³⁰³² 32 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 1, pp. 344-345; ibid., Ex. Doc. No. 29, p. 1; 32 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 1, pp. 147, 284; ibid., Ex. Doc. No. 43, pp. 1-2; 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 1, pp. 157, 173.

³¹ A. B. Tower and R. E. DeRussy to J. G. Totten, San Francisco, April 19, 1856, in U.S., War Dept., The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (70 vols. in 128, Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, pp. 575-578.

Island. The main features of the report were approved by the Chief of Engineers, and batteries on Angel Island definitely entered the Army's plans. But work on Fort Point continued to drag on, eating up the greater part of the available funds. Thus nothing was done to carry out the projected program of defenses until the outbreak of the Civil War gave the matter new urgency.

Late in 1861 Brigadier General George Wright, commanding the Department of the Pacific, became worried over the possibility of a war with Great Britain and feared that English naval vessels would bombard San Francisco. In response to his urgent request, the local engineer officer drew up a plan of defense designed to protect the city "against a large fleet until the permanent fort at Lime Point can be constructed." Among the other works recommended was one for ten guns on Point Blunt and one for twenty to thirty guns on Point Stuart. Having no Federal funds at his disposal, General Wright tried to persuade the State of California to appropriate the necessary funds for this project. His efforts were not successful, and nothing was done at that time.³²

About the end of 1862 much apprehension began to be felt in San Francisco that a Confederate cruiser, particularly the Alabama, might slip past the city's first line of defenses under cover of darkness or fog and, once beyond the range of the guns at Fort Point and Alcatraz, might range at will, destroying shipping and bombarding military and naval installations and towns. General Wright gave the matter his "most serious consideration" and, among other measures, determined to strengthen the defenses of the inner harbor. For this purpose he obtained an assignment of \$100,000 from the War Department. Meanwhile, on July 30, 1862, he had ordered the construction of batteries on Rincon Point and Yerba Buena Island, two locations not included in the Engineers' works project.

When the War Department learned how General Wright was spending its money, a peremptory directive was sent him to construct the "first batteries" on Point San Jose and on Angel Island. With much reluctance the General abandoned the works he had begun and ordered the building of the fortifications approved by the War Department.³³

The first step in the actual erection of the batteries on Angel Island was taken on the morning of August 24, 1863, when Captain R. S. Williamson, U. S. Engineers, visited the island and made a brief reconnaissance of the terrain. He found good sites for batteries at Point Blunt and Point Stuart, but believed that if forts were erected at both sites, the rugged terrain and the distance separating them

³² War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. L, pt. 1, pp. 714, 760, 771-2, 802, 863-864; pt. 2, p. 531.

³³ War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, 531-534, 542-543, 545, 548-550, 559-560, 564, 568, 578, 586, 599, 600.

would require the establishment of two "separate and distinct posts."³⁴

On September 9, Battery B, Third Artillery, was directed to proceed to Angel Island to assist the Engineers in the construction of the new works.³⁵ Under the command of Lieutenant John L. Tierson, the unit took possession of the island for the United States on September 12, 1863. The landing was made and a camp was established on the western side of the island, at the mouth of the fairly wide valley in which is located the present West Garrison. Evidently at or about that same time the new post was named Camp Reynolds, in honor of Major General John Fulton Reynolds, a former officer of the Third Artillery who was killed at the battle of Gettysburg on July 1, 1863.³⁶

Military History of Angel Island, 1864-1898

On February 2, 1864, Brevet Major George P. Andrews, 3rd Artillery, took command of Camp Reynolds. By the end of that year two barracks buildings had been constructed, along with a bakery and other structures. A small hospital was located at the present Hospital Cove, about three quarters of a mile from the post. In 1869 this latter structure was replaced by a new hospital erected on the hill back of the post.

By about the end of July 1864, the Engineers had completed the construction of two batteries at Camp Reynolds. These were as follows:

Battery 1, located on Point Stuart immediately to the north of the garrison. This battery mounted four guns: three 32-pounders and one 10-inch howitzer.

Battery 2, located on Point Knox, a short distance south of the garrison. This battery mounted ten guns: seven 32-pounders, two 10-inch Rodman guns, and one 8-inch Rodman gun.

In addition, and independently of the Engineers, Major Anderson had erected a battery of five 32-pound guns at the head of the wharf immediately in front of the garrison. The Engineers disapproved of this battery and refused to incorporate it in the system of harbor defenses, but Anderson defended his action and the work continued to exist at least as late as 1869.³⁷

³⁴R. S. Williamson to R. C. Drum, San Francisco, August 24, 1863, in War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, pp. 588-589. See also ibid., pp. 590-591, 596-597, 605-606.

³⁵Dept. of the Pacific, Special Orders No. 205, in ibid., 613.

³⁶Bentley, Angel Island, 1869, 1; Francis Bernard Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army (2 vols., Washington 1901), I, 825.

³⁷Bentley, Angel Island, 1869, 204; War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, pp. 902, 906, 936-937, 997.

The Engineers also constructed a battery at Point Blunt, designed to contain seven guns: six 32-pounders and one 10-inch Rodman gun. By September 20, 1864, this work had been completed, but the guns had not yet reached the site, largely, complained the Engineers, because Major Anderson had received them first and had mounted them at Camp Reynolds. During October additional guns were ordered, and the battery was soon complete.³⁸

This battery at Point Blunt was not connected with Camp Reynolds but was under the orders of the commanding officer of Alcatraz Island. It evidently was not occupied for long, however, since as early as June 6, 1865, it was reported as being in an unserviceable condition due to the parapet having settled. By 1869 three guns had slid over the bank, and the battery had been abandoned.³⁹

Previous to 1869, however, a wharf, a barracks, and officers' quarters had been erected at Point Blunt. These were never occupied by a regular garrison, but were used to house surplus recruits and other troops from Camp Reynolds. By that year the jurisdiction of Camp Reynolds appears to have included the entire island.⁴⁰

In connection with the occupation of Point Blunt by forces from Alcatraz Island, it is interesting to note that as early as about 1864 soldiers from that post raised vegetables on a plot of ground on the south shore of the island. By 1875 this plot was no longer cultivated as it was found less costly to purchase vegetables for the post in San Francisco. Subsequently, however, cultivation was renewed, and was continued by military prisoners from Alcatraz, evidently as long as that island remained in the possession of the War Department.

Relatively little is known concerning the later history of the artillery on Angel Island. In 1870 the Board of Engineers for the Pacific Coast prepared quite an elaborate project for the rehabilitation of the island's defenses, but it was never carried out, at least in its entirety.⁴¹ Batteries were maintained, however, for a number of years,

³⁸ War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, 983-984, 997; R. De Russy, Report on Additional Defenses of San Francisco, September 20, 1864, MS, in Records of Office of Chief of Engineers, War Records Division, National Archives.

³⁹ War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, 856, 1256-1257; T. H. Handbury to B. S. Alexander, San Francisco, February 7, 1869, MS, in Records of Office of Chief of Engineers, War Records Division, Nat'l Archives.

⁴⁰ Bentley, Angel Island, 1869, 12.

⁴¹ Board of Engineers for the Pacific Coast to A. A. Humphreys, San Francisco, January 31, 1870, MS, in Records of the Chief of Engineers, War Records Division, National Archives.

particularly at Battery Knox (see Map No. 1). It was recognized that the armament was out-moded, and the designation of the island as a fortified place was termed a "fiction." On several occasions it was recommended that the installation be discontinued.⁴²

About the end of the 1800's, certainly before 1905, the old armament on Angel Island was removed, and three new batteries were installed, all on the southwest shore (see Map No. 2). They were as follows: Battery Drew, one 8-inch N. D. rifle; Battery Wallace, one 8-inch disappearing rifle; and Battery Ledyard, two 5-inch guns. As will be seen, these guns evidently were left unmanned for a period after 1909, but they seem to have been manned during World War I. Before the outbreak of the next war, however, all heavy armament had been removed from the island.

The most significant phases of the military history of Angel Island are those not connected with the actual fortifications. As early as 1865 other military uses for the post were being suggested. In March of that year the commander of the Military District of Humboldt recommended that Indian prisoners of war from northern California be incarcerated on some island in San Francisco Bay, such as Angel Island. The outcome of this proposal is not known, but in 1869 several Indians captured during campaigns in Arizona were lodged at Camp Reynolds.⁴³

Between April and October, 1866, the post was temporarily abandoned, but thereafter it was continuously occupied until 1946. On October 26, 1866, Angel Island was made the general depot for receiving and distributing recruits from the East who were destined for stations in the West. The recruit barracks "are temporary frame buildings, but are good enough, it is thought, for the present," reported the Secretary of War on September 14, 1867.⁴⁴

For many years, from about 1869 to about 1879, the headquarters of the 12th Infantry were maintained on Angel Island. In 1876 the men of this unit garrisoned on the post numbered 196. During 1875 and 1876 increased accommodations for troops and officers were constructed. The old chapel of the West Garrison was erected at that time, and most of its stained-glass windows were dedicated to members

⁴² Report of Lt. Col. R. P. Hughes, June 24, 1887, as quoted by Harold Epstein, Preliminary Historical Report on Fort McDowell (typescript prepared for History Division, NPS, March 3, 1949), 3.

⁴³ War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, p. 1175; Bentley, Angel Island, 1869, 7, 10.

⁴⁴ Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1867-1868, I, 123; U. S. District Engineer, San Francisco, Picnic Folder, September 21, 1946.

of the 12th Infantry.⁴⁵

Late in 1884 or early in 1885, Colonel William R. Shafter, later the hero of Santiago and Major General of the United States Army, assumed command of Angel Island. He continued in this position until October 20, 1896, thus earning the distinction of commanding the post longer than any other officer. During his tour of duty he occupied the present Quarters No. 43, West Garrison.⁴⁶

During the period of Colonel Shafter's command, Angel Island was garrisoned by troops of the 1st Infantry. Their routine duties at the post were interrupted on at least two occasions. In December, 1890, the regiment left for duty in the field in connection with the Sioux Indian troubles in the Division of Missouri. It returned to the island early in the next year. During the summer of 1894 troops of the regiment were sent to Los Angeles, where a strike had resulted in a suspension of United States Mail service. The presence of Colonel Shafter and his men was credited with bringing about a speedy resumption of mail movements.⁴⁷

Spanish-American War Period

After the departure of the 1st Infantry in 1896, Angel Island was occupied by units of the 3rd Artillery. Two years later the artillery forces were transferred closer to the scene of the hostilities of the Spanish-American War, and it was at about that time, evidently, that the Angel Island batteries were placed in the charge of small caretaking detachments.⁴⁸

On April 4, 1900, by War Department General Orders No. 43, the military reservation on Angel Island was officially named Fort McDowell, in honor of Major General Irvin McDowell.⁴⁹ Up to that time the post had been known variously as "Camp Reynolds," "Camp Angel Island," and "Post at Angel Island."

⁴⁵ Report of the Secretary of War, 1876, 119,153; Helen P. Van Sicklen, Extracts from Fort McDowell Diaries, 1926, MS, 1, in Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco.

⁴⁶ Van Sicklen, op. cit., 2.

⁴⁷ Report of the Secretary of War, 1894, I, 110.

⁴⁸ The actual date of the establishment of the caretaking detachments may have been 1900. See Epstein, op. cit., 4.

⁴⁹ U. S., War Dept., Judge Advocate General, United States Military Reservations, National Cemeteries, and Military Parks: Title, Jurisdiction, Etc. (Rev. ed., 1916, Washington 1916), 29.

Fort McDowell consisted of the whole of Angel Island. By an act of the California Legislature, approved March 9, 1897, the State had ceded to the Federal Government the title to the tidelands surrounding the island to a distance of 300 yards beyond low water mark, the deed of cession containing a reverter clause.⁵⁰ Exclusive jurisdiction to the reservation was ceded to the United States by California on March 2, 1897.⁵¹

Detention Camp, 1899-1901

During June 1899, Major General W. R. Shafter, then commanding the Department of California, established a Detention Camp on Angel Island to accommodate troops which were afflicted with or had been exposed to contagious diseases. This camp was located on Quarry Point, now known as East Garrison.

The site was one of considerable historical interest. Perhaps as early as the 1850's a quarry had been opened on the site. A writer of 1869 said that at that time a man named Michael O'Donnell was in charge of the quarry and that stone had been taken from it for use at Alcatraz, Fort Point, and other defenses about the Bay.⁵² Ten years later O'Donnell was still on the property as an employee of the Navy Department. Evidently rock from the quarry was then being used for work at Mare Island. The stone was apparently also used rather extensively for building purposes in San Francisco.⁵³ It has been said that the pre-1906 Bank of California Building was constructed of Angel Island sandstone.

The 31st Volunteer Infantry was the first unit to occupy the Detention Camp, there being cases of smallpox among its personnel. The last unit left the camp in May 1901, and from that date until November of that year the installation remained in charge of a watchman.⁵⁴

Discharge Camp

During the period of the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection, troops destined for service in the Philippines and those

⁵⁰ California Stat. 1897, p. 74.

⁵¹ War Dept., Military Reservations, California, 1940, 37.

⁵² Bentley, Angel Island, 1869, 11.

⁵³ U.S., War Dept., Division of the Pacific, Outline Descriptions of Posts and Stations of Troops in the Military Division of the Pacific . . . (San Francisco, 1879), 72-76. See also H. L. Buell, Memorandum for Major Abbot, March 24, 1905, MS, in Office of Chief of Engineers, Washington, D. C.

⁵⁴ Van Sicklen, Extracts, MS, 3.

returning from there were at first quartered at the Presidio of San Francisco during processing. It was not long before the disadvantages of the practice made themselves evident. "Dives of vice and saloons of a low order" crowded up to the very limits of the military reservation, to the great detriment of the health, discipline, and morale of the troops.

In order that the war-worn men returning from the Philippines might not "become the prey of the unscrupulous" or be "lured into temptation" while waiting for final separation from the service, it was determined, at the suggestion of Colonel Frank M. Coxe, to establish a Discharge Camp on Angel Island. This installation was founded on the site of the former Detention Camp during November, 1901. Here the men were processed for separation, received their final pay and allowances, and were mustered out of service. During the seven months prior to July 1, 1902, a total of 10,747 soldiers passed through the camp on their way from the Philippines to their homes.⁵⁵

After a few years, the Discharge Camp developed into the Depot of Recruits and Casuals, a sub-post of Fort McDowell. Here recruiting functions conducted on the island for many years and the processing of men from overseas were concentrated. By 1905 over 87,000 men had passed through the depot on their way to and from the Pacific islands.⁵⁶

Angel Island as a Recruit, Discharge, and Replacement Center

As already noted, the artillery batteries at Fort McDowell had been on a caretaker status since at least 1900. In September, 1909, the Secretary of War approved a recommendation of the Chief of Coast Artillery that the "entire system of fire control, as well as the guns and other accessories" on the island should be decommissioned. In November of that year the caretaker detachments were relieved.⁵⁷

At approximately the same time the practice of garrisoning the island with regular line troops was abandoned. About May 1, 1909 the

⁵⁵Van Sicklen, Extracts, MS, 3. In November 1901, the former Detention Camp was moved to the site of the present North Garrison. It was first used in March 1902. A detailed account of the Detention Camp and the Discharge Camp is to be found in a four-part article by Captain John P. Finley, entitled "Discharging a Philippine Army," in Sunset Magazine for Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec., 1902.

⁵⁶Epstein, Preliminary Historical Report, MS, 4.

⁵⁷C. O., Recruit Depot, Fort McDowell to Adj. Gen., U.S.A., Fort McDowell, September 21, 1909, in Van Sicklen, Extracts, MS, 17-18; S.O. 143, Hq. Ft. McDowell, Nov. 4, 1909, as cited in Epstein, Preliminary Historical Report, MS, 4.

8th Infantry, then stationed at Fort McDowell, was ordered to another post. Upon the departure of this regiment, in June, the "post of Fort McDowell, the Depot of Recruits and Casuals, Angel Island, and the entire military reservation on that island" were withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Department of California and made subject to control according to paragraph 187, Army Regulations. Angel Island was about to enter the period of its greatest activity and importance as a military installation.

Prior to the summer of 1909, the War Department had determined to establish a large general recruit depot on Angel Island. Early in May of that year Major Thomas B. Dugan, commanding the General Recruit Depot at Fort Slocum, New York, was ordered to proceed to Fort McDowell to organize the new establishment, which was officially designated "the Recruit Depot, Fort McDowell." Three recruit companies were transferred from other depots to the island. The first of these units, the 8th Recruit Company, reached its destination on June 5, 1909.

The new installation assumed all the functions of the former Depot of Recruits and Casuals. These were primarily to receive recruits from the West, to provide them with a working knowledge of the customs and regulations of the Army and of the early phases of drill, and to forward them to their assigned posts. In addition, all enlisted men returned from the Philippines and the Hawaiian Islands to the United States for discharge, retirement, on furlough, or under orders to report to the Adjutant General, were to be sent directly from the transports to Angel Island for processing.

In the summer of 1909 an extensive building program was begun at Quarry Point to provide accommodations for the expanded depot. The work was conducted by the Quartermaster's Department, and a large portion of the labor was supplied by prisoners from the Alcatraz Military Prison. To guard these laborers it was considered necessary to have one sentinel for every three convicts. For this purpose an additional recruit company was formed on the island during the summer of 1909. The large concrete barracks, hospital, officers' quarters, and many other buildings of the present East Garrison were constructed as part of this program.

It is not possible in this paper to enumerate all the many changes in the functions of the post which occurred during subsequent years. A few, however, may be mentioned. In August 1919, the establishment was designated as a "Recruit and Replacement Depot," and its commander was ordered to assume, in addition to his former duties, the functions of the Commander of the Post Casual Company, Presidio of San Francisco, insofar as they were concerned with the receiving, administration, and disposition of replacement troops en route to overseas stations.

In March 1920, the name of the depot was once more changed, this time to "Discharge and Replacement Depot, Fort McDowell." During January, 1921, the recruit companies, General Service Infantry, which had been stationed at the depot since 1909 were demobilized, and the major

part of the personnel was transferred to a newly-created unit known as the "Recruit Section, Ninth Corps Area Training Center." This unit, in turn, was abolished in November, 1922, when a major change in the functions of Fort McDowell was made. At that time the recruiting activities of the post were discontinued. As a consequence, the establishment was once more renamed, being designated as "Overseas Discharge and Replacement Depot, Fort McDowell." This name it continued to bear until Angel Island was finally abandoned by the Army.

As organized in 1922, the functions of Fort McDowell were the receiving, administration, elementary training, and disposition of troops en route to overseas stations as replacements; and the receiving, administration, and disposition of enlisted men returned from overseas stations for discharge, for reassignment, or on furlough. In 1923 the War Department adopted the policy of transporting troops from one coast to another via the Panama Canal. This practice automatically pressed upon Fort McDowell the further duties of the receiving, administration, and disposition of enlisted men sent to the Pacific Coast by Army transport from Fort McDowell's sister post, Fort Hamilton, New York; and of men enlisted in the West for service in the East. After 1922, practically the only recruiting work carried on at Fort McDowell consisted of efforts to obtain the reenlistment of soldiers returned to the United States for discharge.

By 1925 the term "East Garrison" was in use to designate the concentration of buildings at Quarry Point, while the establishment at the former Camp Reynolds was called the "West Garrison." At that time the West Garrison was maintained by a small caretaking detachment and was used on occasions to quarter surplus casualties who could not be accommodated at the East Garrison.⁵⁸

Preparations for World War II

Fort McDowell shared in the general upsurge in military activity which occurred during 1938, 1939, and 1940 as a result of the European war. At about that time it was estimated that an average of 22,000 men passed through the station each year, the average annual discharges alone numbering approximately 6000.⁵⁹

To meet the expanding needs of the depot, the War Department in February, 1941, obtained the transfer to the post of the federal immigration station, which had been established on the island in 1908.

⁵⁸The above section has been based upon numerous source materials, citations for which will be found in Epstein, Preliminary Historical Report, MS, 3-5; and Van Sicklen, Excerpts, MS, 6-36, 52.

⁵⁹Major Oscar W. Koch, Fort McDowell - Grand Hotel, U.S.A. (mimeographed, [n.p., n.d.], 8.

Rehabilitation of the former immigration hospital and detention ward to serve as barracks for troops was begun immediately.⁶⁰ The former immigration station became known as the North Garrison of Fort McDowell, and it and the East Garrison became the post's main cantonments for the processing of troops.

Fort McDowell, 1941 to 1946

Immediately after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1941, the problem of staging - "the movement of troops, their assemblage, and housing prior to embarkation or after debarkation" - became extremely acute in the San Francisco Bay area. The only troop staging facilities in the region were at Fort McDowell, whose limited accommodations could handle 4,200 men. The post was at once taken over by the Army's San Francisco Port of Embarkation, which during the war served as the principal unit for transportation and for the control of supply to the Pacific theatres of operations.

To supplement Fort McDowell, temporary billets were established in parks, auditoriums, and warehouses scattered over the entire Bay region; and these combined quarters provided the necessary staging facilities until the huge Camp Stoneman, near Pittsburg, was ready to receive its first troops in May, 1942. Thereafter, Camp Stoneman was the staging area which handled most of the troops assembled at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation for duty in the Pacific, while Fort McDowell was used primarily to stage casual overseas replacements or to process troops returning from overseas for rotation or furlough.⁶¹

The war brought many changes to Angel Island. Building activity was greatly accelerated, and temporary barracks and other structures sprang up in numbers. At the West Garrison much remodeling was done to create quarters for non-commissioned officers. A large prisoner of war camp was established under the jurisdiction of the Fourth Army at the North Garrison. There both Italian and Japanese prisoners were housed. Battery Drew was used as a storage depository for dynamite.⁶²

At the end of the war with Japan, Fort McDowell shared in welcoming and processing homeward-bound troops. The post engineers erected a large "Welcome Home" sign, with letters sixty feet high, on the slopes of Mount Ida. As had been the case with dispatching forces to the Pacific, Camp Stoneman was the San Francisco Port of Embarkation's

⁶⁰ San Francisco Chronicle, February 4, 1941.

⁶¹ James William Hamilton and William J. Bolce, Jr., Gateway to Victory (Stanford University, California [1946]), 4-5, 45-46, 187.

⁶² William J. Bolce, Fort McDowell, typescript [n.p., 1946], 2, in Society of California Pioneers.

chief staging area for handling the returned soldiers, but Fort McDowell, as the second-ranking staging installation, played an important part in the hectic work of demobilization.⁶³

By 1946 the major part of the rush was over, and the post, expensive to maintain and supply, was no longer needed by the Army. On August 28, 1946, the small garrison, made up of troops of the Transportation Corps, was transferred to Camp Stoneman. At a brief ceremony under the direction of Captain Zachur Moser, the last commanding officer of Fort McDowell, the flag was lowered, and the post was turned over to the U. S. District Engineer. On September 20, 1946, the War Department officially declared the island and its installations surplus to the War Assets Administration.⁶⁴

Public Health Service Quarantine Station, 1888-1949

Prior to 1895, the quarantine inspection of vessels entering San Francisco Bay was done by the State of California, but to the United States Marine-Hospital Service fell the tasks of fumigating vessels and of caring for passengers who had been exposed to or were suffering from communicable diseases. The latter work was performed under great difficulties, there being no adequate quarantine facilities for the port. On August 1, 1888, Congress appropriated \$103,000 for the construction of a modern, completely equipped quarantine station. A board was appointed to select a site for the new installation, and this body chose Hospital Cove, on Angel Island. "A more desirable place for quarantine could scarcely have been found in the entire sea-board of this coast," reported the Surgeon-General.⁶⁵

On December 22, 1888, the Army granted a permit allowing the Marine-Hospital Service to occupy the site, but the formal transfer did not take place until April 24, 1889, when the Secretary of War released about 10.16 acres, consisting of all the land at Hospital Cove suitable for building purposes and a narrow strip along the entire shoreline of the Cove, to the Treasury Department "for temporary use as a

⁶³ See San Francisco Chronicle, June 23, 1945.

⁶⁴ Ibid., August 29, 1946; W.A.A., Region 10, Preliminary Planning Report on Fort McDowell, typescript (San Francisco, July 10, 1947), copy in files of Region Four Office, NPS.

⁶⁵ Annual Report of the Supervising Surgeon-General of the Marine-Hospital Service . . . 1889, 112. Detailed drawings of the station buildings are to be found in ibid., opp. p.112. The writer is indebted to Dr. Edward Norris, in charge of the San Francisco Quarantine Station, and to Mr. Harold Easter for their kindness in supplying facts relating to the history of the installation from their personal knowledge and for permission to inspect the original Station Logs and other historical records.

quarantine station, with the understanding that upon demand by this Department for the land in question, it will be surrendered." On August 30, 1893, a further transfer of about twelve acres was made subject to the same conditions.⁶⁶

A contract was made with the San Francisco Bridge Company in 1890 for the construction of the plant. The station was opened on May 1, 1892, but work on the buildings continued into 1893. The structures consisted of an administration building, detention barracks for about 400 persons, a hospital, a disinfecting plant for clothing and bedding, a generating plant, a laboratory, quarters for officers and employees, etc. By 1945 there was a total of thirty-three buildings at the station. The U. S. S. Omaha was borrowed from the Navy on July 1, 1893, and, fitted up as a detention ship, was anchored in the cove. The vessel served as a disinfecting hulk until she was condemned in 1914.⁶⁷

Among the officers who have been stationed at Angel Island were several who achieved prominence in medical circles. Dr. Milton Joseph Rosenau, later of Harvard Medical School and the University of North Carolina, was quarantine officer at San Francisco from 1895 to 1898. Dr. Hugh S. Cumming, later surgeon general of the Public Health Service, also served for a time at Angel Island.

With the passage of the years, the Angel Island station was used less and less frequently for detention purposes. More careful medical examination at ports of embarkation and changes in medical practices and thinking have made lengthy detentions for quarantine purposes largely a thing of the past. Persons actually suffering from communicable diseases upon arrival were sent to the Marine Hospital in San Francisco. The last case of quarantine detention at Angel Island occurred in 1935, when a Japanese man, his wife, and his child were held until it was determined that they were not infected with smallpox.

World War II brought an increase in the activity at the station. Some 200 of the crew of the scuttled German liner Columbus were housed there for a number of months during 1940. After a fire destroyed the

⁶⁶Secretary of War to Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, April 24, 1889; same to same, Washington, August 30, 1893; copies in Society of California Pioneers. See also War Dept., Military Reservations, California, 1940, 36-38.

⁶⁷D. A. Carnichael, N. V. Perry, and A. L. Parsons, Report on the Physical and Administrative Equipment at the United States Quarantine Station, San Francisco, California (typescript, 1915). This source contains a detailed description of all the structures existing at that time. See also San Francisco, California, Quarantine Station, Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1945 (typescript), copy in Society of California Pioneers.

administration building of the nearby Immigration Station in August, 1940, the entire crew of the vessel, about 435 men, was quartered at Hospital Cove and remained there until the spring of the next year.⁶⁸ Later in the conflict, the Army was permitted to use the disinfecting equipment to delouse prisoners of war.

Upon the cessation of hostilities the Angel Island installation continued as administrative headquarters and officers' residence for the San Francisco Quarantine Station. Hospital and detention facilities are maintained on a stand-by basis. The inaccessibility of the station renders it unsatisfactory from the standpoint of convenience and expense. The Public Buildings Administration is at present searching for a new site for the installation on the mainland.

Angel Island Immigration Station, 1905-1941

Since the period of the California gold rush, the problem of controlling immigration, particularly of Orientals, into the western United States has been a vexing one. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Gentleman's Agreement with Japan in 1907 had by the latter date cut down the flow of immigration to a small percentage of what it had been previously, but certain classes of Oriental aliens were still permitted to enter the country, and many other persons attempted to enter illegally. Constant vigilance was necessary on the part of federal officials to see that the laws were enforced.

At about the turn of the century the problem was particularly acute in San Francisco, the main port of entry for Orientals into the continental United States. No immigration building existed in the city, and the processing of aliens was conducted in quarters furnished by the steamship companies. The handling of Chinese, especially, caused many difficulties. The immigrants were herded from the ships into cramped, unsanitary sheds from which escape was not difficult and where the Chinese could be approached by persons interested in aiding the illegal entry of aliens. Both officers of the Bureau of Immigration and various local civic groups and friends of the Chinese protested against these "disgraceful" conditions.⁶⁹

As early as 1903, the Commissioner-General of Immigration asked Congress for funds with which to erect an immigration station "on land belonging to the Government in the harbor."⁷⁰ By an act approved March 3, 1905, Congress appropriated \$100,000 to commence the work;

⁶⁸ San Francisco Chronicle, November 6, 1940.

⁶⁹ Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration . 1910, 132-133. See also San Francisco Call, January 19, 1908.

⁷⁰ Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration . 1903, 63; ibid., 1904, 99-100.

and on July 8 of that year the Secretary of War transferred to the Department of Commerce and Labor ten acres of land, more or less, on Angel Island as the site of the projected station. On April 6, 1909, about 4.2 additional acres were transferred for the same purpose.⁷¹ These lands were located at the cove directly east of Point Simpton, on the northern shore of the island.

The selection of the site had been attended by "much controversy and turmoil." There were many, both in and out of Government service, who felt that Angel Island was too inaccessible. The dominant factions, however, maintained that isolation was necessary for the satisfactory handling of immigrants.⁷²

Preliminary work at the site was interrupted by the earthquake of 1906, but was resumed during the next year.⁷³ Facilities included a large, two-story administration building, in which were examination rooms, offices, dormitories for employees, and detention quarters for about one hundred European aliens. A separate structure was designed as a detention quarters for about 400 Orientals. Also built were a hospital, power house, wharf, and other structures. The cost of the improvements, not including a ferry boat and a cutter, was about \$200,000.⁷⁴

Construction of the station was completed early in 1909, but no funds were available for its operation. The Bureau suddenly found that the new establishment was too large and "many years in advance of the requirements of the service." It was decided to let it stand idle until the volume of immigration should increase.⁷⁵

For month after month the installation remained in the charge of a watchman, much to the annoyance of certain local officials, shipping concerns, and members of Congress. As the result of the local outcry and several investigations, funds were made available and orders were given, in October, 1909, to occupy the new station. It was officially

⁷¹Ibid., 1905,70-71; War Dept., Judge Advocate General, United States Military Reservations, National Cemeteries, and Military Parks . . . (rev.ed., 1916), 29. For a legal description of the lands so granted, see War Dept., Military Reservations, California, 1940,36-38.

⁷²San Francisco Chronicle, August 8, 1920; ibid., January 17, 1921.

⁷³Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration . 1906, 71.

⁷⁴Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration . 1907, plate opp. p.79; ibid., 1909, 144-145. See also San Francisco Call, January 19, 1908; and San Francisco Chronicle, October 8, 1909.

⁷⁵Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration . 1909, 144-145.

opened on January 21, 1910.⁷⁶

The station had scarcely been put in operation when it became the subject of much bitter controversy. Those persons who had cried so loudly for better detention quarters for the Chinese, now complained that the facilities were too remote. The Commissioner-General of Immigration believed that the real reason for the protests was the fact that the "promoters, steerers, and attorneys" for Chinese aliens could not ply their trades so profitably as under the old system.⁷⁷

Representations were also made that the new buildings were fire-traps. By 1916 the Commissioner of Immigration was forced to recognize the justice of these complaints, and he asked for appropriations for new structures.⁷⁸ Between 1917 and 1924 the administration on the island was rocked by a series of scandals. Employees at the station were accused of improper conduct toward immigrants and of aiding in the unlawful landing of aliens.⁷⁹

The Immigration Service was not long in realizing that the location on Angel Island was inconvenient. Transportation to and from the station was expensive; for a number of years water had to be brought in by barge; and the employees lost much time in transit to and from the mainland. As early as 1915 agitation was begun to move the installation to San Francisco, and appropriations for that purpose were requested at that time and at intervals for many years thereafter. In 1918 the Commissioner-General frankly admitted that the placing of the station on the island "was undoubtedly a mistake."⁸⁰

The Angel Island Immigration Station played an important part in one phase of World War I. Immediately upon the declaration of hostilities on April 5, 1917, all enemy aliens were removed from German ships in United States ports. All these collected for internment in Pacific

⁷⁶ Annual Report, San Francisco, 1910, Commissioner of Immigration, July 19, 1910, No. 52967/27, in Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, National Archives; San Francisco Chronicle, October 8, 1909.

⁷⁷ Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration, 1910, 132-133.

⁷⁸ San Francisco Examiner, December 2, 1916.

⁷⁹ Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration, 1917, XXXI, 199; San Francisco Examiner, February 7, 1917; March 24, 1917; and January 29, 1924.

⁸⁰ Annual Report . . . 1918, 39; San Francisco Chronicle, January 15, 1921; and August 8, 1920; San Francisco Examiner, June 29, 1921.

ports, including Honolulu, were taken to the Angel Island station, where they were held until accommodations were prepared for them in North Carolina.

One interesting use of the island was as a place for the detainment of federal prisoners charged with felonies and awaiting trial. Several spectacular escapes at last drove the local Commissioner of Immigration, in February, 1925, to protest against the practice, and it was discontinued. The first deportation hearing of Harry Bridges was held at the station.⁸¹

By 1934 the advocates of the abandonment of the island station had won their point, but difficulty was encountered in finding a location to which to move.⁸² As early as September 30, 1937, it was announced that the Immigration and Naturalization Bureau would be given quarters in a new Appraisers Building planned for construction in San Francisco.⁸³

Long before the new structure could be completed, however, the War Department began to urge that the Immigration Station be moved so that the site could be utilized for the expanding activities at Fort McDowell. Further impetus for the move came in August, 1940, when a fire destroyed the administration building. At that time several hundred seamen from the scuttled German liner Columbus were quartered at the station and were very helpful in combating the conflagration.⁸⁴

In November of that year the aliens held at Angel Island were transferred to a new temporary station on Silver Avenue, San Francisco, and the property was declared surplus to the needs of the Department of Justice on December 9, 1940. The Commissioner of Public Buildings, on January 2, 1941, gave custody to the War Department, which took over the property and improvements about the first of February.⁸⁵

In judging the importance of the Angel Island Immigration Station it should be borne in mind that immigration through West Coast ports was but a small fraction of that through eastern stations. In 1920, for instance, a total of 430,001 immigrants was admitted into the country. Of these, only 22,698 were processed at San Francisco.⁸⁶

⁸¹ San Francisco Examiner, February 3 and 6, 1925.

⁸² San Francisco Chronicle, November 24, 1934.

⁸³ San Francisco Chronicle, September 30, 1937; April 11, 1938.

⁸⁴ San Francisco Chronicle, August 13, 1940.

⁸⁵ San Francisco Chronicle, February 4, 1941.

⁸⁶ Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration . . 1920, 5, 364.

On the other hand, San Francisco was the chief place of entry for those relatively few Chinese and Japanese who were admitted into the continental United States.⁸⁷ In a sense, therefore, the Angel Island Station was the "Ellis Island of the West."

⁸⁷ Annual Reports, Commissioners and Inspectors in Charge of Immigration, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, 1908-32, in Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, National Archives.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This investigator has been able to find no detailed secondary accounts of the history of Angel Island or of any of the separate installations thereon. Practically the only historical works covering the island available to the general public are the brief summaries contained in various local guide books, perhaps the best of which is Work Projects Administration, Writers' Project, California, San Francisco, the Bay and its Cities (2nd ed., New York, 1947), 364-366. None of these, however, is very satisfactory.

In view of the fact that public interest in Angel Island has not been encouraged by the War Department and considering the difficulty encountered in obtaining information relating to current activities from certain Government agencies, it is not surprising that the most useful printed summary of the history of Angel Island which has come to the attention of this investigator is to be found in a folder issued to guests at a picnic held by the Office of the District Engineer, San Francisco, on September 21, 1946.

Mrs. Helen P. Van Sicklen, formerly of the Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco, has made an extensive investigation of the history of the island. Copies of some of her notes and some of the source materials used by her are to be found in the library of the Society and were very valuable for the purposes of this study.

For the most part, however, this narrative has been based upon a great variety of materials gathered from numerous scattered sources. The most obvious of these are the printed annual reports of the Secretary of War, Chief of Engineers, Commissioner-General of Immigration, Supervising Surgeon-General of the Public Health Service, and other officials of the Government. Files of local newspapers and several magazines have also provided much information.

The Office of the Chief Historian, National Park Service, supplied many valuable excerpts from manuscripts found in the National Archives among the records of the departments and agencies concerned in the occupation of Angel Island. The San Francisco offices of those depart-

ments and agencies were not investigated as thoroughly as could have been desired.

It has not been possible to list in a separate bibliography all of the many source materials upon which this study is based. Full bibliographical information therefore has been included in the first footnote citation of each source.

In general, acknowledgment for assistance given in the preparation of this report has been given in the footnotes. Special mention should be made, however, of the cooperation rendered by Colonel Fred B. Rogers, U. S. A., retired; by the Society of California Pioneers; and by Mr. Olin Bryan, Chief, Utilization and Planning Branch, San Francisco Office of Real Property Operations, WAA. Several of the photographs and maps accompanying this report were supplied by Mr. Bryan. Photographs Nos. 1, 3, and 4 were taken by Mr. Lowell Sumner, Regional Biologist, NPS; Nos. 5 to 15 were taken by Mr. Harold Fowler, Park Planner, NPS. 15

SUITABILITY OR ADAPTABILITY OF THE PROPERTY

Extent of surviving historical remains

The surviving historical remains on Angel Island are almost embarrassing in their abundance. There are about 235 buildings and about sixty-five other structures on the property, and all of them, even those temporary buildings erected during World War II, might be said to have a certain degree of historical importance. Because of their numbers it has not been found practicable even to list them in this report. All are shown on the accompanying maps and are fully described in the SPB-5 prepared by the United States District Engineer and on file with the War Assets Administration.

It is obvious that the preservation of all these structures as features of an historical monument would be beyond the financial resources of any unit of local government, such as the County of Marin. Some of the buildings must be removed and, probably, some may be employed for recreational or resort purposes. The determination as to the disposition of any particular structure must await the formation of a definite use program for the property. Some observations as to which structures are most qualified for preservation might be helpful, however, in the preparation of an acceptable use program.

First, any acceptable historical project for Angel Island should provide for the marking and preservation of the three gun batteries still existing on the property. These are Battery Drew, Battery Wallace, and Battery Ledyard. All are unarmed but are in excellent condition (for locations see map no. 3; for photographs see photos 8 to 10). Some old excavations were observed on Point Stuart and Point Knox which may be the remains of the old Civil War batteries at those locations. The ground has been so disturbed by roads and other construction work, however, that more study will be necessary before any certain identification can be made. Even if remains of the old forts cannot be found, their sites should be marked.*

Second, it would be highly desirable to preserve all the remaining buildings of the West Garrison and to restore them and the grounds to the condition they were in about 1900 (see map no. 6). Such action would enable future generations to visualize the appearance of an old-time Army post. Except for the large brick Coast Artillery Storehouse,

*These sites can be located exactly through the use of the following two maps to be found in the Office of Chief of Engineers, Washington, D. C.: U.S., War Dept., Corps of Engineers, San Francisco Harbor Map Shewing the Three Batteries Now Constructed at Points Blunt, Knox & Stewart, Angel Island; Drawn under the Director of Col. R. E. De Russy, 1864, MS; and ibid., Map of Camp Reynolds, Point Stewart and Point Knox, Angel Island, San Francisco Harbor, California. Made under the Direction of the Board of Engineers, Pacific Coast, by Thos H. Handburg...1868, MS.

Building No. 84 (see photo no. 6), the buildings at West Garrison are of frame construction, and some of them need considerable repair. At any rate, every effort should be made to preserve the old Commanding Officer's Quarters, Building No. 43 (see photo no. 5), which was General Shafter's home and which contains a fireplace said to have been built for him. The old Chapel, Building No. 74 (see photo no. 7) should also be preserved.

Third, the principal structures and the beautiful grounds of the Quarantine Station should be preserved (see map no. 2 and photos nos. 11 to 13). The historical values of the station buildings would not be greatly impaired if the interiors were judiciously altered to provide accommodations for yachting groups or for a high type of guest camp.

Fourth, the main structure of the former Immigration Station burned to the ground in 1940, and the appearance of the installation was thereby greatly altered. The remaining lofty and forbidding detention barracks and other structures do not serve to re-create the atmosphere of the installation. Many of the temporary buildings at the North Garrison could well be torn down, and the fate of the permanent structures should be made the subject of further study. To a large extent the disposition of the physical remains of the former "Ellis Island of the West" must depend upon the use program decided upon for the island and upon the funds available for maintenance (see map no. 5 and photo no. 16).

Fifth, the only practicable disposition for the massive concrete structures, the parade grounds, the playfields, and the comfortable residences of the North Garrison would appear to be to put them to use, as a resort hotel, public institution, or recreational area in keeping with historical traditions. Otherwise their maintenance and protection would be so costly as to make almost prohibitive the expense of operating the proposed historical monument. Judicious alteration to make the buildings suitable for such use would not impair their historical values (see map no. 4 and photos nos. 14, 15).

Sixth, one of the most important historical "remains" on the property is the relatively unspoiled natural appearance of the island. The services of competent landscape architects should be employed to restore more of the area to its natural state. This work can be done most economically if performed before the numerous non-native trees, planted during World War II, come to maturity.

Other physical characteristics

Containing about one square mile of land, Angel Island is the largest and highest island in San Francisco Bay. It is roughly triangular in shape, with an area of about 640.2 acres and a shore-line circumference of about 5.7 miles. The terrain is generally steep, rising sharply from sea level to a height of about 770 feet (recent official Government maps differ as to the exact height of the island's peak, figures varying from 762 to 776 feet).

The surface is broken into sharp ridges which converge at the Angel Island Peak, or Mount Ida, near the center of the island. Most of the shoreline is too sheer for practical use, but there are generally beaches where the canyons empty into the bay. Except where grading or filling has been done, there is little level ground.

In their natural state, the western slopes of the island were generally grass-covered and devoid of trees, except in sheltered canyons. The northern and eastern slopes, however, were quite heavily wooded, chiefly with California Laurel and Coast Live Oak. Since the occupation of the island by the Army, however, the character of the vegetation has been considerably altered through the large-scale planting of trees and shrubs.

It is claimed that the island, particularly its eastern and northern slopes, enjoys some of the finest climate in the San Francisco Bay region. Prevailing westerly winds and fog sometimes plague the western side of Angel Island, but Mount Ida does much to protect the opposite shore from these nuisances. The mean maximum temperature is 62.5°, the mean minimum 50.2°; the average annual rainfall is 22.2 inches.

One possible limitation upon development of Angel Island as an historical monument is the shortage of fresh water. It is the belief of this investigator, however, that the seriousness of this problem, insofar as it concerns possible monument development, has been somewhat exaggerated. It is true that the Army found it necessary to bring in on barges practically all the water for its installations. The Quarantine Station, however, has from the time of its establishment been able to obtain all the water necessary for its needs from wells on its own property. At times the population of this station has approached 500 persons. After 1918 the Immigration Station, likewise with occasional occupancy by about 500 persons, was able to procure all necessary water from springs and wells on the island. In addition, there are springs at West Garrison which supplied the needs of about one hundred persons at that post for several decades after 1863. Also, there are springs and wells at the former Alcatraz Gardens which supplied the year-round wants of that installation.

If a large-scale resort is to be developed upon the island, it almost certainly would be necessary to bring in fresh water by barge or pipe. For ordinary historical monument use, however, such action probably would not be necessary. Heavy week end needs for fresh water could be met by storing water during the week in the ample reservoirs and tanks on the island. Salt water is now used for sanitary facilities.

Accessibility and location

Being an island, the property naturally has a problem concerning accessibility. Angel Island lies about three-quarters of a mile southeast of the Tiburon Peninsula of Marin County, from which it is separated by swift-running Raccoon Strait, the deepest section of San Francisco Bay. The City of San Francisco lies about three miles

south of the island, while Oakland is some six miles to the southeast. The nearest city of any size is Sausalito (population 4,719 in 1945), which lies about two miles to the west.

Access to the island is by boat. If the property is to be used as an historical monument arrangements would have to be made to provide adequate boat service, probably from both Marin County and San Francisco. It is probable that the boat trip would serve to increase the popular appeal of the monument.

On July 1, 1945, the estimated population of the San Francisco-Oakland Metropolitan District, comprising six counties of the San Francisco Bay Area, was 2,151,000.* Since the residents of this entire region could be expected to take an interest in an historical monument on Angel Island, along with numerous tourists and visitors, a heavy visitor load could be expected at the proposed monument.

Adaptability, cost, and feasibility of development

Angel Island and its existing improvements are adaptable to use for historical monument purposes; and except for possible considerations of cost, development as an historical monument is entirely feasible.

Until a detailed use program is presented, no estimate of the cost of development can be given. The present plan of Marin County contemplates no extensive development in the near future, but it is certain that the museum and the other improvements incident to an adequate historical use program would be expensive. And, due to the probable deterioration of the improvements now existing on the island, the expenses will be greater the longer the development is delayed.

One possible way of meeting the costs of development would be to lease certain of the improvements for resort or recreational use. If properly controlled, and in keeping with historical tradition, such use would not impair the historical values of the property.

The present improvements on the island include roads, highways, fire trails, electric lines, telephone lines, portable water lines and tanks, fuel oil lines, fire water lines, sewer lines, steam line, and approximately 300 buildings and other structures, mostly of a permanent type. According to the SPB-5 prepared by the U. S. Engineers, these developments cost \$2,254,463.

Estimated cost of proper maintenance

No estimate of the cost of maintaining the proposed historical monument can be made until the use program is established. It should be stated, however, that mere police and fire protection at present provided by the WAA costs approximately \$3000 per month.

It should be stated that the County of Marin evidently expects
*California Blue Book, 1946, p. 667

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its maintenance costs to be considerably under the present figure, since its present use program intimates that the county expects that the WAA will remove from the property "non-historical structures, or those not in keeping with historical traditions." The local office of the WAA, however, informally has informed the Region Four Office, NPS, that the WAA will be unable to remove any buildings from Angel Island.

Boundary data

The legal description of the area requested for the proposed historical monument is "all that certain island or tract of land situated in San Francisco Bay, State of California, $37^{\circ}51' \text{ north}$, $122^{\circ}25' \text{ west}$, and known as Angel Island . . . together with the tide-lands ceded by Act of the Legislature of the State of California, March 9, 1897." Out grants and permits to certain portions of this property have already been issued to:

1. The Coast Guard for the area shown in red on Map no. 3 accompanying this report, together with the use of roads and other utilities.
2. The Public Health Service for the area shown in green on Map no. 3, together with the use of roads and other utilities.

The area occupied by the Public Health Service will, in all probability, be declared surplus when an appropriate site for the San Francisco Quarantine Station can be found on the mainland.

The area considered not to exceed that necessary for the preservation and proper observation of the historical monument is the total of that requested by the County of Marin as such a monument. The reasons for this recommendation have already been discussed.

Every available bit of historical and legal evidence relating to the title of Angel Island has been examined by the investigator making this report, and to the best of his knowledge, no parcel or parcels of land in the recommended area of the historical monument were acquired by the United States subsequent to January 1, 1900.

Place in state or regional plan for conservation of park and historical resources

There is a definite need for an historical monument or museum to present the story of the development of the entire San Francisco Bay area. As far as is known, the only other plan now seriously proposed for the preservation of the historical values of Angel Island is represented by a bill now before the State Legislature which provides for the acquisition by the State of California of the property as an historical monument. It is the feeling of this investigator that the island properly belongs within the State Park System, which includes other historical areas. However, the Park Commission has already

declined to take action on the acquisition of the island.

The City and County of San Francisco is at present considering a proposal to purchase the island at full fair valuation from the WMA, in which case the preservation of historical values would apparently receive very little consideration in the future development of the property.

Nature of and justification for the proposed use program

As outlined in the application by Marin County, the proposed use program for the property is extremely general, consisting chiefly of a declaration that it is the desire of the county "to keep Angel Island as it is, in order that we of the present and those of the future may know what a part of San Francisco Bay looked like prior to the coming of the white man." It is proposed that non-historical structures be removed. "Preservation of the area under public ownership," states the application, "is the main objective desired by the County." The application further states that ultimately a museum should be developed on the island to present the history of Angel Island and of San Francisco Bay. Supervisor William D. Fusselman, authorized representative of the Marin County Board of Supervisors, informed the Region Four Office, NPS, by telephone on April 1, 1949, that the County expected to give fire and police protection to the property but that further details of a use program would not be worked out until the recommendation of the National Park Service was made. For further comment upon this topic, see pages 1-2 and page 3 above.

RESPONSIBILITY OF AGENCY REQUESTING PROPERTY

Legal authority

The County of Marin is a legally constituted political subdivision of the State of California. It has adequate authority to acquire and administer areas for historical monument purposes.

Adequacy of financing

The County of Marin is capable of financing the maintenance of an historical monument on Angel Island. The amount of funds available for that purpose will depend solely upon the disposition of the Board of Supervisors and the residents of the County from year to year.

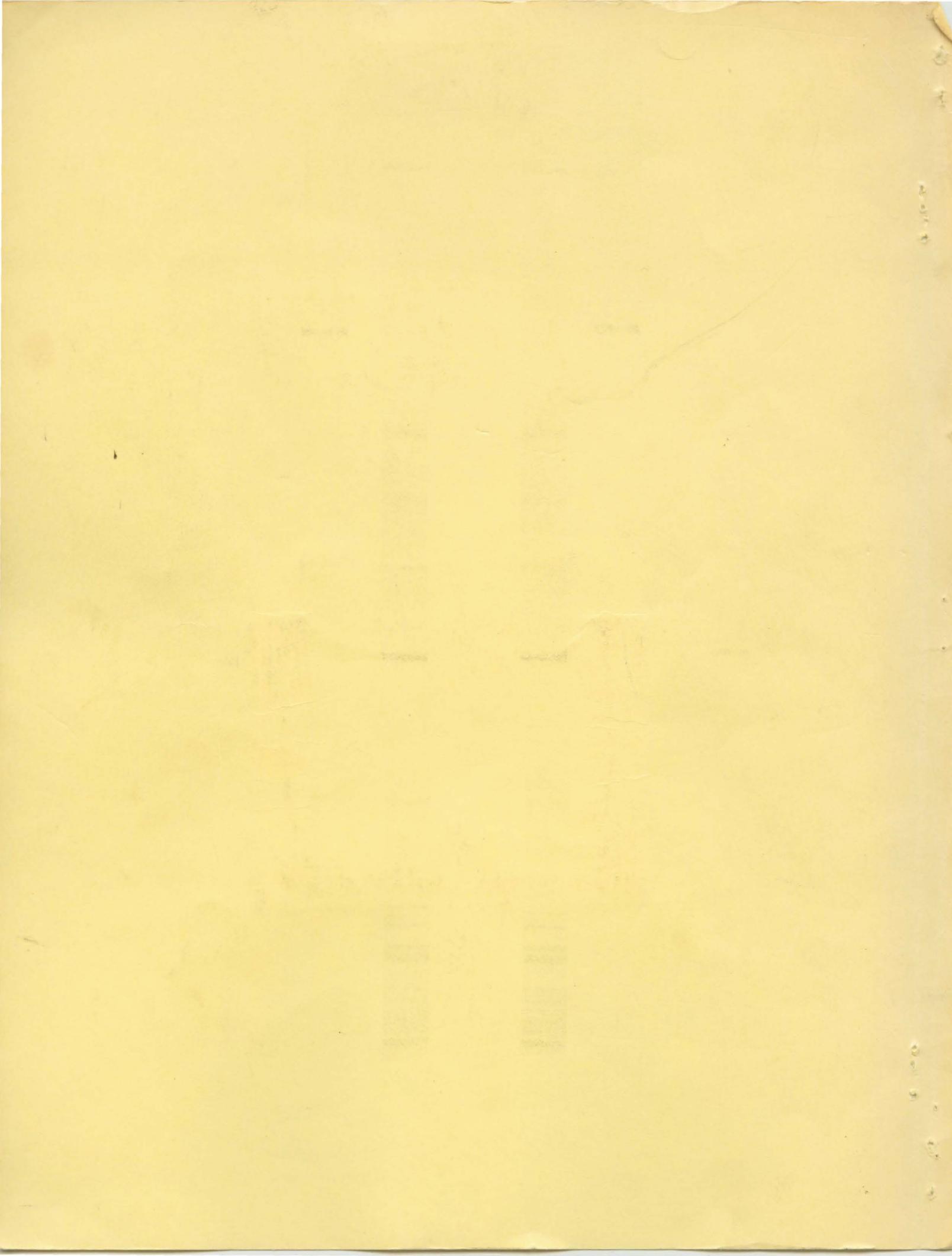
Experience in historical work

The County of Marin and its Board of Supervisors has had no experience in administering historical areas, although the County operates several recreational parks. There are in the County, however, a Centennial Committee which is interested in historical matters, as are several local historical and conservation groups. From these agencies, as well as from the National Park Service and various historical societies throughout the State, adequate technical advice for administering the monument could be obtained.

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Adequacy of staff and experience with similar areas

As already indicated, the County of Marin has no historical staff nor has it had any experience in administering historical areas. There is no reason to believe, however, that a perfectly adequate staff would not be obtained to administer the proposed monument on Angel Island.



J. Porter Shaw Library



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J. Porter Shaw Library